

VISUAL CALLER IDENTIFICATION

Abstract

A visual caller identification system and method are provided. A caller identification device of a called party's telephone, whether integrated with the telephone or stand-alone, includes a series of colored lights for visually alerting the called party to an incoming call. The called party may program the caller identification device so that a first colored light flashes any time the caller ID identifies information known to the called party. A second light flashes any time caller identification information is provided, but where the information is unknown to the called party. And, a third colored light flashes any time the caller identification is not provided (e.g., private, unlisted, etc.). When the telephone begins to ring, the called party may look at the telephone for a quick screening without having to go to the telephone to read the caller ID. If the first light flashes, the called party knows that the incoming call is from a known party. If the second light flashes, the called party knows that the calling party will be identified if the called party goes to the telephone to read the caller ID. And, if the third light flashes, the called party knows that no caller identification information is available for the incoming call. Alternatively, caller identification information to be displayed on the called party's caller ID device may be projected onto a projection surface, such as a wall in the called party's home or office.